



PRESS RELEASE

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DRIVER CONVICTED OF TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS INVOLVING FOUR DEATHS SENTENCED TO 72 MONTHS

PHOENIX, ARIZONA -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, announced on February 13, 2002, that Diego Gallegos-Castillo, 21 of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced to 72 months in prison, by United States District Judge Frank R. Zapata, in Tucson, Arizona.

On February 5, 2000, at Federal Route 19 at the South Komelic turnoff, near Sells, Arizona the defendant was driving an extended-cab pickup truck with eleven illegal aliens. While traveling at an estimated speed of 87-93 miles per hour the defendant lost control of the vehicle, crashed into a wash, and flipped the truck end to end. Four of the eleven Mexican nationals were killed as a result of impact. One of the four was a 14-year-old girl. The seven others received serious bodily injuries. Law enforcement and emergency personnel were called to the scene and the injured were transported to various medical facilities

Diego Gallegos-Castillo had been found guilty by jury on January 24, 2001 on eleven counts of Transportation of Illegal Aliens resulting in death and/or serious bodily injury.

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The investigation that led to the successful prosecution was a result of cooperative law enforcement provided by Tohono O'odham law enforcement, United States Border Patrol, Border Patrol Investigations, Tucson Police Department, and Arizona Department of Public Safety.

The prosecution was handled by Lynnette Kimmins and Jane Westby , Assistant United States Attorneys, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-00-713 TUC FRZ
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